

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of accessing information, comprising the steps of:
2 distributing information objects across a plurality of servers;
3 maintaining a centralized status of each of said servers;
4 receiving a request for one of said information objects;
5 inspecting said centralized status to determine an availability of one of said servers
6 having said information object; and
7 selectively responding to said request with a redirection message selectively
8 redirecting said request to said one server.

1 2. The method according to claim 1 further comprising a step of selectively
2 transmitting an error message in response to said request and said inspecting step resulting in
3 a determination that said one server is unavailable.

1 3. The method according to claim 1 wherein said step of selectively responding
2 to said request includes redirecting said request to one of (i) said one server and (ii) an error
3 handling object.

1 4. The method according to claim 3 wherein said error handling object comprises
2 an error message.

1 5. The method according to claim 3 wherein said error handling object comprises
2 a redirection command.

1 6. The method according to claim 1 wherein each of said information objects
2 comprise a web page.

1 7. The method according to claim 1 wherein said maintaining step includes
2 periodically updating a status of each of said servers.

1 8. The method according to claim 7 wherein said updating step includes pinging
2 said servers.

1 9. An information server system comprising
2 a plurality of servers, each hosting a different information object;
3 a centralized database storing a status of each of said servers;
4 a communication interface configured to receive a request for one of said information
5 objects; and
6 a controller responsive to said request and to said status of each of said servers for
7 selectively responding to said request with a redirection message selectively redirecting said
8 request to one of said servers.

1 10. The system according to claim 9 wherein said controller is configured to
2 selectively transmit an error message in response to said request and said inspecting step
3 resulting in a determination that said one server is unavailable.

1 11. The system according to claim 9 wherein said controller selectively responds
2 to said request by redirecting said request to one of (i) said servers and (ii) an error handling
3 object.

1 12. The system according to claim 11 wherein said error handling object
2 comprises an error message.

1 13. The system according to claim 11 wherein said error handling object
2 comprises a redirection command.

1 14. The system according to claim 9 wherein each of said information objects
2 comprise respective web pages.

1 15. The system according to claim 9 wherein said controller is configured to
2 periodically update said status of said servers stored in said database.

1 16. The system according to claim 15 wherein said controller is configured to
2 periodically ping each of said servers.

1 17. A method of providing a website, comprising the steps of:
2 storing web pages on a plurality of distinct web servers;
3 maintaining a centralized status of each of said web servers;
4 receiving a request from a remote client for one of said web pages;
5 identifying a status of a one of said web servers hosting said one web page; and
6 selectively responding to said request with a redirection message selectively
7 redirecting said remote client to said one server.

1 18. The method according to claim 17 further comprising a step of selectively
2 transmitting an error message in response to said request and said identifying step resulting in
3 a determination that said one server is unavailable.

1 19. The method according to claim 17 wherein said step of periodically updating a
2 status of each of said servers.

1 20. The method according to claim 19 wherein said updating step includes pinging
2 said servers.

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